OO LITTLE MELODY IS BIG DRAWBACK TO "THE BLUE BIRD"

laeterlinck's Lines Lose Their Literary Lyricism When Set to Music---Brevity of Speeches Is a Hindrance, While Drama Lacks Great Emotional Situations

By W. J. HENDERSON.

AMES RUSSELL LOWELL was a poet, an essayist and a scholar, but he has not generally been recognized as a prophet, and yet he wrote these

> "The bluebird, shifting his light load of song From post to post along the cheerless fence."

Who told him? How could any one in his time have foreseen the ex- here. "Le Coq d'Or" will be preceded rdinary spectacle of Saturday evening, December 27, when a great con- by "Cavalleria Rusticana," sung by se of people, having paid amazing prices for the privilege of entering the ropolitan Opera House, sat in judgment on Albert Wolff's long and tenuous om sanctate to Maurice Maeterlinck's symbolic drama?

But there was much to see. Boris Anisfeld designed scenery and costumes ch transformed the imagination of Maeterlinck into a theatrical spectacle. all this the music was merely incidental. Spectacle, however, is not new the lyric drama. The stage became the abode of show early in its history the musical play fell a victim to it almost in its infancy.

and no one knew it better than Gluck

one criticised a passage of his music

"Did it displease you in the theatre

No? Well, then, that is enough

When I have got my effect in the the-

atre I have got all I wanted, and I as-

sure you it matters very little if my

concert hall." And Gretry speaking of

Gluck's art said: "Everything here

should be on a big scale, for the picture

is meant to be seen from a great dis-

tance. The musician works only in a

Naturally the typical opera goer will

sum up his objections to "The Blue

Bird" in a single sentence, "There is-too little melody." That may not be

The ideal opera book is one which

The drama of Mr. Maeterlinck has

pages on two lines of text.

Some of the little group of serious

Greenwich Village have striven to

bitions as those of "L'Oiseau Bleu"

are inartistic and that a plous regard

return to the simplicity of Elizabethan

scenery. Without doubt the learned

far as they have been able to ascer-

Old Assumptions Questioned.

poverty was not rather that of inven-

dor in the dying glories of the "Sacre

Rapprentazioni." The Wagnerian ideal

Boris Anisfeld's scenery fits the op-eratic "L'Oiseau Bleu." It is not his

But some of us wonder whether the

ion. Certainly down in Italy about

tain it.

broad way."

When the Grand Duke Ferdinand of | ce espoused the Princess Chris- of perception that the drama was not nged festival, including dramatic / lines are spoken as Maeterlinck wrote reductions. One of the intermezzi them there is a beautiful illusion of alt with the tale of Arion and was lyricism. But the moment one sets ranged by the poet Rinuccini. To these same lines to music they lose anged by the writer quote from their literary lyricism and find no subown book, "Some Forerunners of stitute for it in music, for in the latter medium the artist must work always

"The theatre, so we are told, repre- in broad effects, in long curves and big ed a sea dotted with rocks and strokes of the brush. This is espem many of these spouted springs of cially the case with music of opera ving water. At the foot of the mounains in the background floated little What a pity Mr. Wolff did not keep Amphitrite entered in a car that prophet more in mind! When rawn by two dolphins and accomled by fourteen tritons and four- he said; en naiads. Arion arrived in a ship ofth a crew of forty. When he had recipitated himself into the sea he ing a solo accompanied by a harp, ot by a lyre as in the ancient fable. When the avaricious sailors thought music is not agreeable in a salon or a enguifed forever they sang a us of rejoicing, accompanied by bassoons, cornets and trom-

Lyric Drama Crosses Alps. A little later the lyric drama of

aly crossed the Alps and entered Opera Calls for Emotions in Song. Mazarin had dwell fong in the Roman halls of the Barb-will and Me spirit had become attuned to Italian inuse and saturated with Italian theatrical at. In Paris the court was buried in gloom, caused by the death of the Queen's father. Mazarin sought to lift voice their emotions in song. That is had become attuned to Italian music the inky closk by introducing what what opera aims to permit. Otherwise the may closed "Comedies en musique the spoken drama would occupy the aved machiens a la mode d'Italie." In theatre exclusively. 1645 an attempt had already been made with a musical play called "La presents a succession of well devel-Festa Teatrale della Finza Pazza." It Festa Teatrale della Finza Pazza." It was given in the Petit Luxemburg and was assuredly a novelty, as we learn tions." When each successive emofrom the exasperated comments of St. tional state is developed by the connd, who called it "A fantastic flict of personalities, motives and acproduction of poetry and music." He continued: "A play sung from be-finds his opportunity to escape the ginning to end, as if the persons represented had come to the absurd under-sented had come to the absurd understanding of discoursing in music the lyric expression. most commoplace, as well as the most important, concerns of life, is contrary to nature. It wounds the imagination and offends the understanding."

If St. Evremond had attended the world premier" of "L'Oiseau Bleu"— song. But since the real emotions, but let us not digress, Mazarin's first such as they are, beloag to Grand-production, presented to a "select" father and Grandmother, to Night and te gave Luigi Rossi's "Orfeo" before the full court, from which, of course, there was no appeal. The famous Leonora Baroni was the Euridice, The excellent Cardinal had brought his Italian singers with him from Rome and had with affectionate care lodged the prima donna in the mansion next to his own, where she was waited upon his servants. This, however, has nothing to do with the performance. Forelli was the supervisor of the scenic attire of the opera. The costumes were gorgeous and the changes of scenery astonished the audience. But history solemnly records that the performance lasted six hours, and

that the audience with one voice whispered afterward, "On pensait mourir d'ennul." Unfortunately for the courtiers the Queen seemed to for dramatic purity would impel us to favor the work, for it was given three times a week for two months. Her Majesty sat it out in state except in ent, when she left to go to her evotions and so affronted the prima donna and offended the plous Cardinal that there was a delightful little whirlwind of gossip in the court,

Magnificence Meets Criticism.

Despite the magnificence of the pro-(witton unkind things were said, presumably by the enemies of the Cardihai. Guy Joly wrote and we may mad: "This comedy with music cost fore than 500,000 crowns and caused every one to reflect particularly the royal party, who were being harassed and who thought that, as so much the blue bird that could sing German bey had been spent, the needs of the state could not be surgent." But others talked about "This beautiful Dre correctly, Morpheus—since every with equal power in the organic union

So far as THE SUN'S reviewer was entire setting might have been conable to see, no one went to sleep at the ceived in a different key, but whether world premier, though remarks audibly another would have supplied the deade suggested that some one "pensait mands of the large Metropolitan stage Boarir dennul." After all it was an and distracted attention from the fee-A composer, moved by the bleness of the medium of vocal utterthe ic content of a drama and unable bleness of the medium of a size which is the content of a drama and unable ance may well be doubted. restive the unsuitability of its What would Gordon Graig or to musical treatment, made a Adolphe Appla have done with the valuant essay at an operatic score, problems of this songless opera? Perwhich disclosed itself as a long and haps either would have advocated the Pearisome waste of recitative varied abolition of the music and a return to by some few passages of arioso and the spoken drama, for which either acompanied by orchestral descrip- could have devised a perfectly suitable tons of ingenious design but insuffi- setting. However, the entire matter Cent potency to brace the fragile fab- is hardly worth so much space. A the against the harsh wind of public vast amount of energy, time and

money has been expended on a pro-Mr. Weld's misfortune was his want duction which has received from va-

Bonfiglio and Bartik.

Messrs. Hackett, De Luca and Didur.

OPERA OF THE WEEK.

Metropolitan Opera House.

MONDAY, 8:15 P. M.—"L'Oiseau Bleu," Mmés. Easton, Delaunois, Ellis and Perini; Messrs. Couzinou and Rothier. WEDNESDAY, 8:15 P. M.—"L'Italiana in Algeri," Mme. Besanzoni,

THURSDAY—"Faust," Mme. Farrar, Messrs. Martinelli and Rothier.
FRIDAY—"Cavalleria Rusticana," Mme. Muzio, Mr. Crimi; "Le
Coq d'Or," Mmes. Garrison and Sundelius, Messrs. Poldur and

SATURDAY, 2 P. M .- "Samson et Dalila," Mme. Besanzoni, Mr.

ATURDAY, 8:15 P. M .- "Tosca," Mme. Farrar, Messrs. Hackett

Diaz; pantomimists, Misses Gelli and Rudolph, Messrs. Bolm,

rious professional commentators many columns of profound consideration.

"L'Oiseau Bleu" enters the repertory of the Metropolitan to-morrow night. Society, which was inclined to support the work before it was produced, will now have an opportunity to sit through it.

METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE.

"Le Coq d'Or" will have its first performance this season on Friday eve-ning, when it will be sung by Mmes. Garrison, Sundelius and Robeson and Messrs. Didur, Diaz, Ananian and Audisio, and danced by the Misses Galli and Rudolph and Messrs. Bolm, Bonfiglio and Bartik. Mr. Bodanzky will conduct the work for the first time Mmes, Muzio, Perini and Mattfeld and Messrs. Crimi and Chalmers. Mr. Moranzoni will conduct. Other operas this week will be as



ian, Laurenti and Bada. Mr. Wolff, the composer of the opera, will conduct.
"L'Italiana in Algeri" on Wednesday evening, with Mmes, Besanzoni, Sun delius and Howard and Messrs. Hack-ett, De Luca, Didur and Picco. Miss Galli and Mr. Bonfiglio will lead the

corps de ballet. Mr. Papi will conduct. no great emotional situations. The "Faust" on Thursday evening, with protagonists are children. If they had any emotions to be published the most Mmes, Farrar, Ellis and Berat and Messrs, Martinelli, Rothler, Couzinou suitable medium would be the folk and D'Angelo. Mr. Wolff will conduct "Samson et Dallla" will be this production, presented to a "select" such as they are, belong to Grandfather and Grandmother, to Night and week's Saturday matines opera, with
midence of about thirty in a small sale of the Palais Royal, was a faillove, &c., &c., there is no possibility are, on the following Shrove Tuesday of organic unity in the music. Everylove, and the production of the production of the spirit of Maternal Love, &c., &c., there is no possibility of organic unity in the music. Everylove of the production of the product thing must be episodic and indeed

"Tosca" will be given at popular prices on Saturday evening, with But even accepting all this, we are still confronted with the brevity of Hackett, Scotti, Malatesta, Reschig-Mmes. Farrar and Marsh and Messrs. the speeches. Unless the musician resorts to the antiquated device of long gelo. Mr. Moranzoni will conduct. iteration his lyric must come to an end At tomight's opera concert Gounod's almost as quickly as it begins. But in

a modern opera we should be aston- Marie Sundelius, and Rossini's "Stabat Cantata, "Gallia," will be sung, with ished indeed to hear a singer warbling Mater," by the Misses Ponselle and in florid song through ten or twelve Besanzoni and Messrs, Hackett and Mardones and the chorus. Chorus and orchestra will be under the direction of thinkers who seek to recreate the the- Giulio Setti. William Tyroler will be atre according to the high ideals of at the organ.

convince us that such pictorial exhi- CONCERTS, RECITALS, NOTES OF MUSIC.

Mischa Levitzki will be the soloist at the Symphony Pociety's concert this afhistorians who have told us all about ternoon in Accian Hall. The prothe ascetic vows of the Elizabethan gramme: Symphony No. 6, "Pathetique," stage to observe lifelong poverty and Tschalkovsky; fugue from string quarchastity have told us the truth in so tet, opus 133, Beethoven; concerto for

The programme for the society's cor cert for children in Acolian Hall next Saturday morning is as follows: Introduction to Act 3, "Lohengrin," Wagner; overture, "Fréischuetz," Weber; nocturne, from "Midsummer Night's Dream," Mendelssohn; march movement from "Pathetique" symphony, Tschalkovsky; the same time they were enjoying scenic spectacles of considerable splen-March from "Alda," Verdi,

Eddy Brown will be the soloist at the was of course the true one, albeit it Philharmonic Society's concert this af-was not original with the creator of ternoon in Carnegle Hall. The proternoon in Carnegle Hall. The pro-gramme: Rachmaninoff, Symphony No. Virgin," with Rebecca Clark, viola and 2. El minor, opus 27; Sibelius, tone poem, Florence McMillan, plano. The horn player in the trio will be Maurice van The tickets are 50 and 25 cents. G minor, for yielin and orchestra; Was-ner, prelude, "The Mastersingers." The Praag. The tickets are 50 and 25 cents. but unhappy Orpheus, or to speak fault that Wolff's music does not unite programme for the society's concert in with equal power in the organic union Carnegie Hall next Saturday evening is concert in the control of the society's concert in the control of the control as follows: Wagner, overture, "Rienzi"; introduction, Act 3, and Bacchanale, "Tannhauser"; overture, "The Flying Dutchman": Slegfried Idyl: Tschalkovsky, fantasy, "Romeo and Juliet"; Wagner, Wotan's Farewell and the Magic Fire Scene, "The Valkyr"; Sounds of the Forest, "Slegfried"; prelude and Love Death, "Tristan and Isolde"; Love Death, "Tristan and Tschaikovsky, "Marche Slav,

The programme for the Philadelphia Orchestra's concert in Carnegie Hall on Tuesday evening is as follows: Mendels-achn, overture, "Hebrides"; Schumana, concerto for piano and orchestra, A minor, Alfred Cortot, soloist; Tschai-korsky, Symphony No. 5.

The programme for the Boston Sym shony Orchestra's concert in Carnegie Hall on Thursday evening is as follows Brahms, symphony, C minor; Gluck overture, "Iphigenic in Aulis"; Wagner prelude to "Parsifat"; Lisst, "Mephisto" waltz. The programme for the Saturday matinee on January 10 is as follows Beethoven, symphony, "Pastoral"; Debussy dance poem "Jeux." ("Play") new here; Glazoupov, symphonic poem, "Stenka Razine," (built upon Russian

Herbert and Mary Dittler will give a oint recital of piano and violin music this afternoon in the Princess Theatre. They will play three sonatas, Bach's in E minor, John Ireland's in A minor, new here, and Dohnanyi's in C minor, opus

will give a song recital this evening in Carnegie Hall. His programme includes numbers by Purcell and Handel, Jewish songs and operatic selections.

Harold Bauer will be the assisting artist at the third concert of the Franko chamber music series under auspices of the Music League of the People's Institute this evening in the Washington Irving High School. A Brahms pro-gramme will be given, Mr. Baper taking part in the piano quartet in G minor opus 25 and in the trio in E flat, opus 40, for plane, violin and French horn. Mary Jordan will be heard in two songs for contralto, viola and piano, "Longing at Rest" and the "Cradle Song of the

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For late music notes see preceding page.

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"Tristan and Isolde." and Marche Slav.
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SOLOIST, LEVITZKI Tscharkowsky, Symphon v "Pathetique, BEETHOVEN, SCHUMANN, olian Hall Sat. Morn., Jan. 10. at 1 Symphony Concert

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Jan. 6 ALFRED Cortot

CONCERTS OF THE WEEK

SUNDAY—Philharmonic Society, Carnegie Hall, 3 P. M. Symphony Society, Aeolian Hall, 3 P. M. Herbert and Mary Dittler, violin and piano sonata recital, the Princess Theatre, 3 P. M. Opera concert, Metropolitan Opera House, 8:30 P. M. New Symphony Orchestra and soloists in Stony Wold Hospital benefit, Hippodrome, 8:15 P. M. Jewish Musical Association, Carnegie Hall, 8:15 P. M. Yvette Guilbert, Maxine Elliott's Theatre, 2:20 P. M. Chamber Maxine Legister of People's Institute. Chamber music concert of Music League of People's Institute,

Washington Irving High School, 8:15 P. M.

MONDAY—Hambourg Trio, Aeolian Hall, 3 P. M. New York Chamber Music Society, Aeolian Hall, 8:15 P. M.

TUESDAY—Philadelphia Orchestra, Carnegie Hall, 8:15 P. M.

Allen McGuhae, tenor Aeolian Hall, 3 P. M. Ellen Rumsey,

contralto, Aeolian Hall, 8.15 P. M.
WEDNESDAY—Maurice Dumesnil, pianist, Aeolian Hall, 3 P. M.
Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Bloch, violin and piano sonata recital, Sixty-third Street Music Hall, 8:15 P. M.

Sixty-third Street Music Hall, 8:15 P. M.

THURSDAY—Boston Symphony Orchestra, Carnegie Hall, 8:15
P. M. Ethel Frank, song recital, Aeolian Hall, 3 P. M. Augusta
Cottlow, pianist, Aeolian Hall, 8:15 P. M.

FRIDAY—Biltmore musicale, Biltmore Hotel, 11 A. M. The
Oratorio Society of the New York City Christian Science Institute, Carnegie Hall, 8:15 P. M. Loraine Wyman, soprano;
Howard Brockway, pianist joint recital, Aeolian Hall, 8:15 P. M.
SATURDAY—Boston Symphony Orchestra, Carnegie Hall, 2:30 P. M.
Edward Morris, pianist, Aeolian Hall, 3 P. M. Philharmonic
Society, Carnegie Hall, 8:30 P. M. Mary Cavan, soprano; Otokar
Marak, tenor, joint recital, Aeolian Hall, 8:30 P. M. Vladimir
Dubinsky's concert, Chalif Auditorium, 8:30 P. M. Orchestral
concert, David Mannes, conductor, Metropolitan Art Museum, 8 concert, David Mannes, conductor, Metropolitan Art Museum, 8 P. M. New York Symphony Orchestra, in Music League's con-cert, Stuyyesant High School, Fifteenth street and First avenue.

Wolfsohn Musical Bureau & Music League of America unnounce CARNEGIE HALL, SUNDAY AFT., Jan. 11, at 3

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ALLEN MCQUHAE SONG RECITAL. (Steinway Piano.)

SOKOLSKY-FREID Piano-Organ Recital. (Steinway Piano.) Pauline WATSON HOUSE COMPLETELY SOLD OUT. See Daily Papers for Future Announcements.

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Acolian Hall, Mon. Aft., Jan. 5, at 3. HETROPOLITAN OPERA MON., 8:15. BLUE BIRD. Easton, Gordon, Delanucis, Ellis, Perint, Mellish; Courinou, Rother. Cond., Wolff.

Mgt. Loudon Charlton. Knabe Plano.

Acolian Hall Mon. Aft., Jan. 12, at 2. AURORE

LACROIX

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Acolian Hall, Sat. Aft., Jan. 17, at 2. Pitrst Plano Recital This SEASON

METROPOLITAN OPERA
MON., 8:15. BLUE BIRD. Easton, Gordon, Wolff.

WED., 8:15. ITALIAN IN ALGIERS, Be-sanzoni, Sundeilus, Galli; Hackett, Do Luca. Didur. Cond., Papi.

THURS, at 8, FAUST. Farrar, Ellis, Berat; Martinelli, Confinent, Bothier. Cond., Wolff.

SAT. 8:15.(\$10:083.50) TOSCA. Parrar; Hackett. Polymon.

SAT. 8:15.(\$10:083.50) TOSCA. Parrar; Hackett. Polymon.

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sical Association Joser Shilsky, tenor,